

child care

in utah

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), authorized by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, assists low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance, and those transitioning from public assistance in obtaining child care so they can work or attend training/education. In Utah, CCDF funding is administered by the Department of Workforce Services' Office of Child Care.

Goals of the CCDF program:

1. To allow each state maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children or parents within that state
2. To promote parental choice by empowering working parents to make their own decisions on the child care that best suits their family's needs
3. To encourage states to provide consumer education information so parents can make informed choices about child care
4. To assist states in providing child care to parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance; and to assist states in implementing the health, safety, licensing, and registration standards established in state regulations

Utah's Child Care Program

In Utah, CCDF funds are primarily spent on two activities:

1. Child care assistance for income eligible families; and
2. Quality initiatives for all child care providers.

CCDF funds are administered by the Department of Workforce Services' (DWS) Office of Child Care (OCC). The OCC's 13 member advisory committee provides advice and guidance on pertinent child care policy

issues. Advisory committee members also help the OCC prioritize how CCDF funds are spent through their representation of children, parents, and child care providers.

The Office of Child Care's vision is that "Quality, affordable child care is available to every child in Utah who needs it."



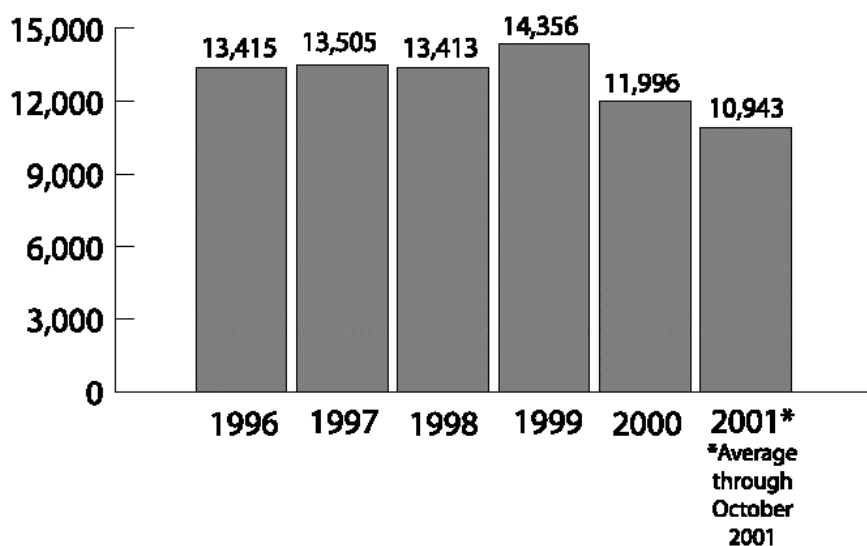
Payment-to-Parent Assisted Child Care Program

The Payment-to-Parent Assisted Child Care Program provides funding for child care to parents who are employed, or employed and attending school or training, and who meet eligibility requirements. The program serves single parent families who are engaged in approved activities:

ents must be engaged in the following activities:

- Employment (one parent must be employed 15 or more hours per week; the other parent must be employed 35 or more hours per week)
- Employment and training/education (both parents must meet the employment hour requirements described above)

Utah's Child Care Caseload History



- Employment (full or part-time); a minimum of 15 hours per week is required
- Simultaneous employment and training/education (must be completed within 24 months)
- Cooperation to obtain child support for the family

The program also serves two-parent families when neither parent can adjust schedules to provide care for their children. Both par-

How Can Parents Qualify?

To qualify for assisted child care, families must have less than \$8,000 in countable assets. Countable assets do not include the house they live in and one vehicle per working adult.

Families must also meet income eligibility. Family income must be equal to or below the limit set for their household size. For example, a household size of 4 would not be able to have a gross

income above \$2,672 a month.

Parents may choose a provider that best meets their family's needs. Providers must meet minimum health and safety standards. Effective June 30, 2000, minimum health and safety standards were revised. Non-relative, private home providers are now required to obtain a residential certificate. The new standards for residential certification include: criminal background check, First Aid, CPR, and annual monitoring of the residence.

The amount of child care subsidy is determined based on several factors and may not cover the total cost of child care. Parents are paid with a two-party check made out to the parent and the provider and are responsible to pay the child care provider for all costs incurred. Additional supports are available for children with special needs.

Utah's Quality Initiatives

A minimum of four percent of CCDF funds must be used to improve the quality of child care. Utah spends approximately 8% of its CCDF allocation on quality initiatives such as child care resource and referral services, training and professional development for child care workers, out-of-school time program support, infant/toddler initiatives that increase the availability and quality of infant/toddler care and work/life education for Utah businesses.

Child Care Resource and Referral

Utah's child care resource and referral (CCR&R) system provides community-based child care information and referral services. This referral service links parents to providers, employers and com-

Training and Professional Development

The goals for the OCC's Training and Professional Development activities are to:

1. Improve the quality of child care for all children in Utah by

increasing the levels of education and experience of early childhood/child care workers

2. Improve school readiness in Utah's children by increasing the levels of training and expertise of early childhood/child care workers

Resources to increase wages and benefits are not accessible to most child care providers, so the OCC Career Ladder and Provider Achievement Awards make incentives and scholarships available to those who seek to improve their knowledge and skills in early care and education

School-Age Programs

Juvenile crime and victimization triple between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm, the hours after school when many children are unsupervised. As a result, School-Age programs are essential to working parents.

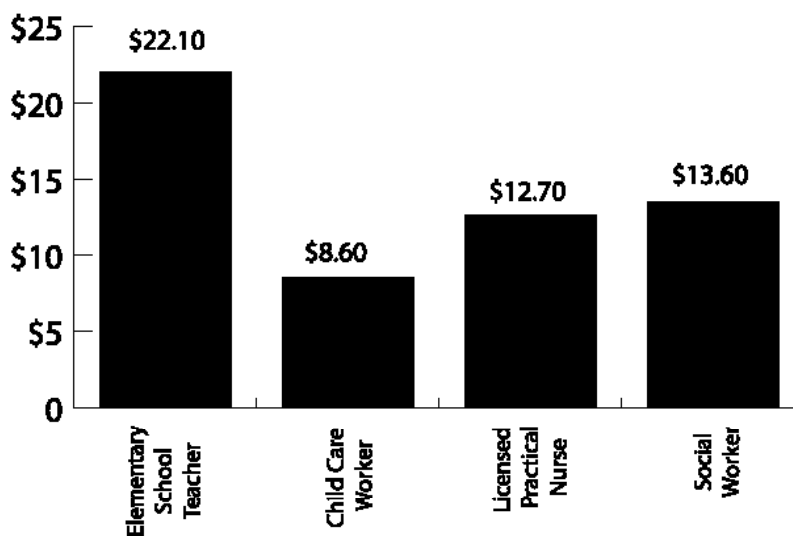
"Quality child care is care that promotes the optimal growth and development of children."



munities to child care planning services, and providers to training and technical assistance. The CCR&R system provides connections to a complex network of family providers, regulators, employers, educators, professional associations, and community service organizations. Parents can call a locally based child care resource and referral agency toll free and receive information to assist them in their search for quality child care.

While all CCR&R agencies follow an outline of "core services," each CCR&R agency is structured to meet the needs of the community in which they reside.

Wage Comparison



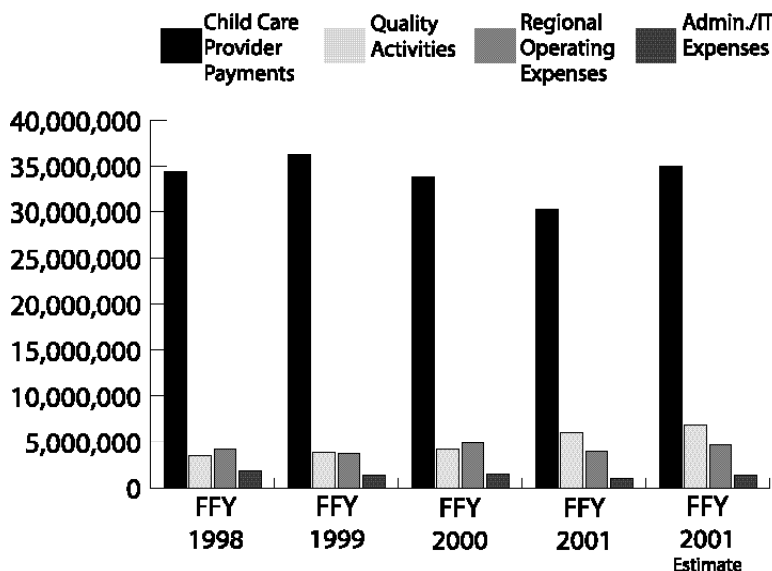
DWS contracts with private and public program providers to help operate school-age program sites during the school year and summertime in Utah. The OCC offers training and support to these programs and works to develop awareness and understanding of quality before-and after-school programs.

Infant/Toddler Program Support

Parents face many challenges when looking for available, affordable, and quality infant and toddler child care. To support both families and child care providers, the OCC issues grants

For FY 2001, the child care resource & referral centers received a total of 13,207 calls. Of those calls, 8,273 were parent referral calls.

Child Care Expenditures



to child care providers to increase the availability, affordability and quality of infant/toddler child care.

Work/Life

The OCC's work/life initiatives focus on helping businesses be more successful by creating workplaces that support a diverse workforce and a culture that recognizes the work/life needs of its employees. Work/life programs and policies take many different forms, but businesses that truly benefit from work/life programs are the ones that align their

work/life strategies with their business strategies, ensuring that their primary business and productivity objectives are supported by their work/life efforts.

Each year, the OCC presents awards to the Top 10 Family-Friendly Companies in Utah. Winners are companies that have developed creative ways to address their business needs while supporting their employees' work/life needs. Awards are presented annually at DWS' Utah Employer Conference.

For additional information on these or other programs go to:

jobs.utah.gov



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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities by calling (801) 526-9240. Individuals with speech and/or hearing impairments may call the state relay at 1-800-346-4128.